

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 23, 2010

The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

The BP Deepwater Horizon oil spill is an unprecedented tragedy. As such extraordinary steps must be taken to stop the flow of oil and begin the long process of cleaning up the Gulf of Mexico.

First, we respectfully ask you to waive temporarily Section 27 of the Merchant Marine Act of 1920, also called the Jones Act, which requires ships working in U.S. waters to be built, operated and owned by Americans.

There have been many contradicting and conflicting reports concerning the Jones Act. In order to remove any ambiguity on the issue and eliminate potential bureaucratic delays entirely we call on you to suspend the Jones Act to show the American public that the United States is utilizing all the resources – foreign and domestic – at its disposal.

Second, we respectfully ask that you tap into the great American ingenuity and expedite the approval process of the many private sector technologies available to assist in the clean-up efforts in the Gulf.

A recent Times-Picayune editorial said, *“Smart ideas for cleaning up the massive oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico could very well come from entrepreneurs and small business owners, but only if people with sound proposals can get the attention of BP or government agencies.”*

Testimony presented at last week’s hearing before the Senate Small Business and Entrepreneurship Committee shows that there are great barriers between the development and deployment of potentially helpful clean-up technologies.

Entrepreneurs and small business owners are unsure where to submit their ideas and innovative technologies. Reports say that BP has received more than 20,000 proposals yet only approximately 500 are being considered. That is unacceptable.

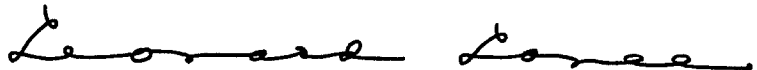
And while we applaud the establishment of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s technology solutions website as well as the U.S. Coast Guard’s interagency assessment program

for alternative technologies, both are overwhelmed, under-utilized and cannot adequately evaluate and implement proposals in a timely fashion.

We hope you will ask BP, the EPA, the Coast Guard and other federal agencies to work more closely with universities, businesses and individuals to implement innovative and environmentally safe technology solutions.

Thank you very much for your consideration of these suggestions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Leonard Lance". The signature is written in dark ink on a white background.

Leonard Lance
Member of Congress